



Australian Garden

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HISTORY

Orchids in Lune River, Tasmania
Pineapples in Queensland
Wattles in Hannover, Germany

Royal Botanic Gardens
Victoria

- 8 APR 2022

LIBRARY

Editorial

Francesca Beddie



Wilken, R. (1998). Horticulture for women: a foreword to the history of Australian women garden designers, *Australian Garden History*, 9(5)

Hendry, M. (1998). Gertrude Jekyll, Edna Walling and Sylvia Crowe: an appreciation of three gardeners, *Australian Garden History*, 9(5)

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<https://www.gardenhistorysociety.org.au/funding/nina-crone-writing-fund-call-for-donors/>

I am writing this column after two days of rain put more than 200mm in our rain gauge. The trees are prematurely autumnal; the roses mildewed; the news is dominated by reports on flooding and Russia's invasion of Ukraine. It is a disturbing time. Again, we see the consequences of not heeding the warnings of science or learning from the horror of past wars.

Yet, as this issue of *Australian Garden History* amply demonstrates, human beings are capable of great feats of discovery and artistic endeavour; they can be good custodians of the land; they can win battles for equality and conservation.

The front cover introduces the work of Deborah Wace, fabric designer, ecological activist, plant advocate and professional printmaker, who will be speaking at the annual conference in Hobart in November (see page 32 for booking details). Wace pens an evocative picture of her Lune River Garden in southeastern Tasmania.

Julie Campbell writes about other women who have combined their talents for gardening, art and writing. Her interest in the place of women in the horticultural profession is not new. In 1998 *Australian Garden History* ran two articles on the history of women gardeners and many readers will be familiar with Ina Higgins and Edna Walling, who both attended Burnley Horticultural College. Revisiting these lives is no bad thing. Historical perspective can change and cast new light on the past; moreover, the retelling can find new audiences. In this case, Campbell's query to the Edna Walling archive in the State Library of Victoria prompted a librarian to delve further into Walling's plant preferences across her career.

The worldwide support for the Ukrainians underlines how interconnected the globe is, instantaneously these days, but we should not forget that the trade in goods and ideas has a very long history. Wace sees herself following in the footsteps of the 18th-century naturalist, JJH Labillardière. Margaret Phillips, curator at the Charles Sturt Memorial Trust, reveals the horticultural side of the explorer, who had seeds shipped across the seas. John Dowe and Boris Schlumberger introduce us to the Wendlands of Hannover, who produced taxonomies of New Holland wattles. Glenn Cooke traces the history of the pineapple brought to Australia on the First Fleet, and John Dwyer defends the agapanthus, a native of South Africa, which has become a symbol of the Australian summer.

Many of the names appearing in this issue can also be found in the *Oxford Companion to Australian Gardens*, published 20 years ago. Its co-editor, Richard Aitken's reflections on the gargantuan task of compiling the book's many threads appear on p.36.

Deborah Wace and Stuart Macpherson, who has lent his own professional experience to reviewing a history of arboriculture, were both supported to write for the journal by the Nina Crone Writing Fund. Their articles are testament to the valuable aim of the fund to encourage new voices in the making of Australian garden history.

Cover photo *Caladenia caudata* or spider orchid, Lune River, photo Deborah Wace

Caladenia caudata is found mainly in dry heathland and heathy woodland habitats in lowland areas of northern, eastern and southeastern Tasmania. It is a threatened species endemic to the state, with much of its habitat lost through historical clearing. Its flowers (4 to 5 cm in diameter) appear infrequently, in response to disturbance such as fire. Wace's magnification of their beauty brings them into more prominent view.

Australian Garden HISTORY

quarterly journal of the Australian Garden History Society

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John Spooner's cartoon (image State Library of Queensland) shows Commissioner Tony Fitzgerald uncovering corruption in Queensland in the late 1980s. As Glenn Cooke explains on pages 14 to 17, the pineapple has come to symbolise the state.



Deborah Wace

RECIPIENT OF A NINA CRONE WRITING FUND GRANT

A wild garden in remote Tasmania *In the footsteps of Labillardière*

Button grass landscapes are amongst the most pyrogenic plant communities in Australia and need considered management with fire to maintain diversity. Underlying these button-grass peats are quartzite gravels – a hard pan of glacial moraine, crystals, agate and fossils – shifted and ground by immense forces.

Photo Deborah Wace

This is my story of the creation of a garden juxtaposed with the surrounding untamed botanical wonderland of far south Tasmania. For 20 years, I grew this garden in Lune River, turning a button-grass hillside into a verdant acre of food, fruit and flower. Digging and working, getting strong and sunburned, I would stretch and look out past the tannin-stained waters of the Lune River to Adamson's Peak and Mt La Perouse, rising from the World Heritage Area, and marvel at the stark timeless beauty of it all.

My garden¹ was 10 kilometres from the type locality (a scientifically distinct region) of Recherche Bay and the historically significant

French Garden heritage site, a garden planted by Felix Delahaye in 1792. The area's heritage has spurred and informed my environmental activism to this day.

In 1791, two scientific research ships under the command of Rear-Admiral Bruni d'Entrecasteaux sailed from Brest in France in search of the great maritime hero La Perouse. They did not find him. Their amicable encounter with the Palawa people of Recherche Bay – the Lyluequonny – and the many collections of botany, zoology and language that came from this peaceful visit form a remarkable story. It is one of a brief, trusting exchange between the two cultures before the ensuing British colonialism devastated Palawa society and culture. It is also a story of amassing an important scientific collection that helped

to inform a groundswell of popular support in a campaign more than 200 years later to protect the cultural landscape of Recherche Bay.

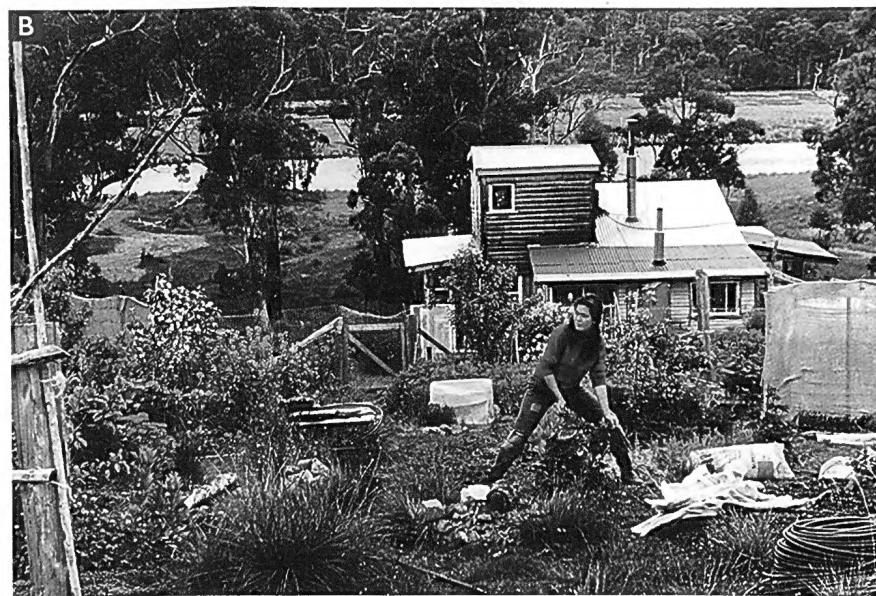
Resilient gardening

Walking and plant collecting while singing freely is a rich theme in my life. I returned to Tasmania in 1991, marking my transition from a life focused on song as a member of the a'capella group Arramaieda, singing songs of social justice and sense of place. Arramaieda was groundbreaking, original and deeply satisfying — but song is voiced and then it's gone; it is ephemeral. I desired to use my hands, to put myself to work to create a home: to do something physical, tangible, practical.

I chose to go from one of the biggest cities in the world to one of the most isolated regions. My partner Laurie and I built a rustic dwelling with new and salvaged materials; we lived off the grid. The button-grass slope was virgin, acidic, peaty quartzite, among dolerite outcrops, the natural flora atop the shallow soil reflecting the different geology beneath. Wherever I dug in the button-grass soil, the land would be forever changed. I saw this as an enormous responsibility, knowing native species would be eclipsed in areas of cultivation. Water management was another constant duty with the sandy free-draining soil.

The garden soil was first enriched with a layer cake of organic raw materials, into which we planted pears, plums, apple trees, olives, berries, currants, herbs — making raised beds for veggies and planting fruit trees into bottomless apple crates. A gardener from way back, I know that healthy soil is the secret and that weeds are inevitable. We gathered seaweed in big feed bags for use as a top mulch. I'll never forget our later garlic crop, a marching battalion of spears, pushing up through the soil, through this salad mix of seaweed, crystal-edged with frost in the moonlight.

Huge winds are a torment in far south Tasmania, with prevailing westerlies, fierce north-westerlies, wet southerlies and gentle, foggy easterlies. Come spring, these winds would strip blossoms and break branches that I'd worked so hard to protect. I learned how to bottle all my fruit and vegetables, pickles and chutneys. Nothing was wasted and the harvest was busy. Even on a hot day, standing over a hot woodfired stove, the resulting bottles of summer sunshine held promise for the cold winter.

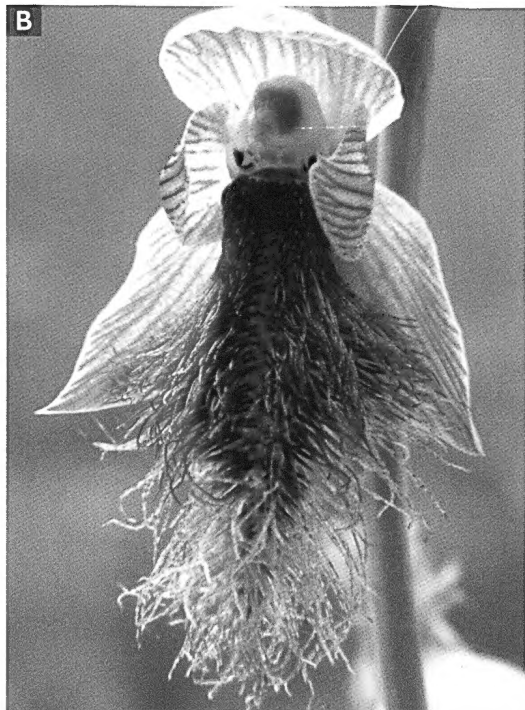


A B C My Lune River garden on the button-grass hillside in 1991 or 1992, photos Laurie Fraser

I My story intersects with others in two families, acting as joint custodians of the 45 hectares of Lune River land; all are creative people with a special synchronicity. Recognition is gratefully given to my ex-partner Laurie Fraser; my sister-in-law Wren Fraser Cameron, author of *The Oyster Girl*; and her husband David Cameron, a highly regarded marine scientist and amateur botanist.



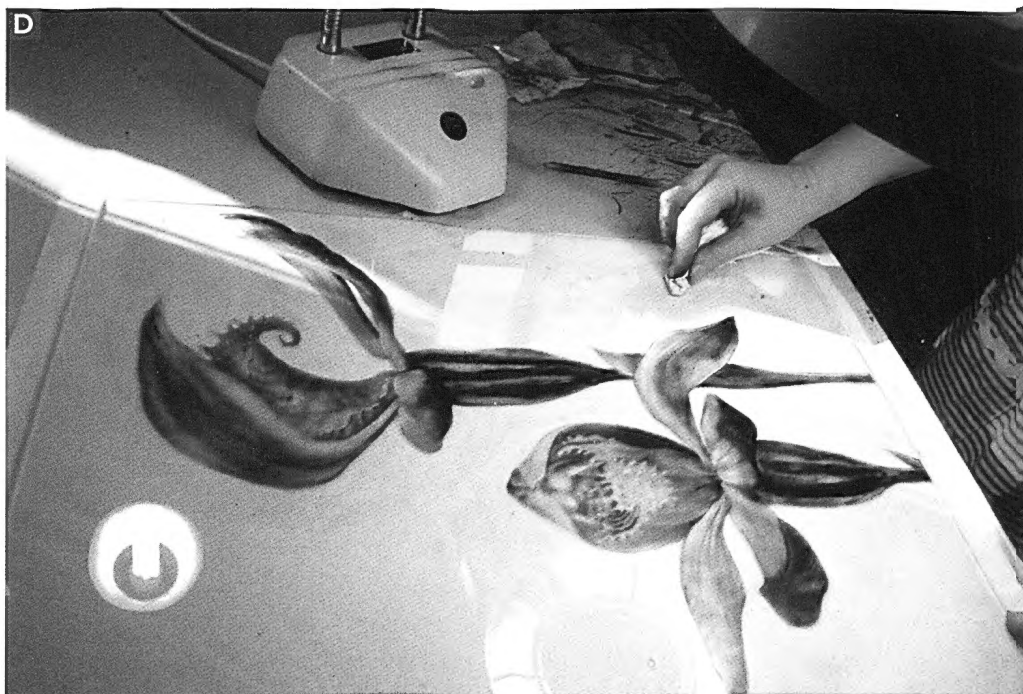
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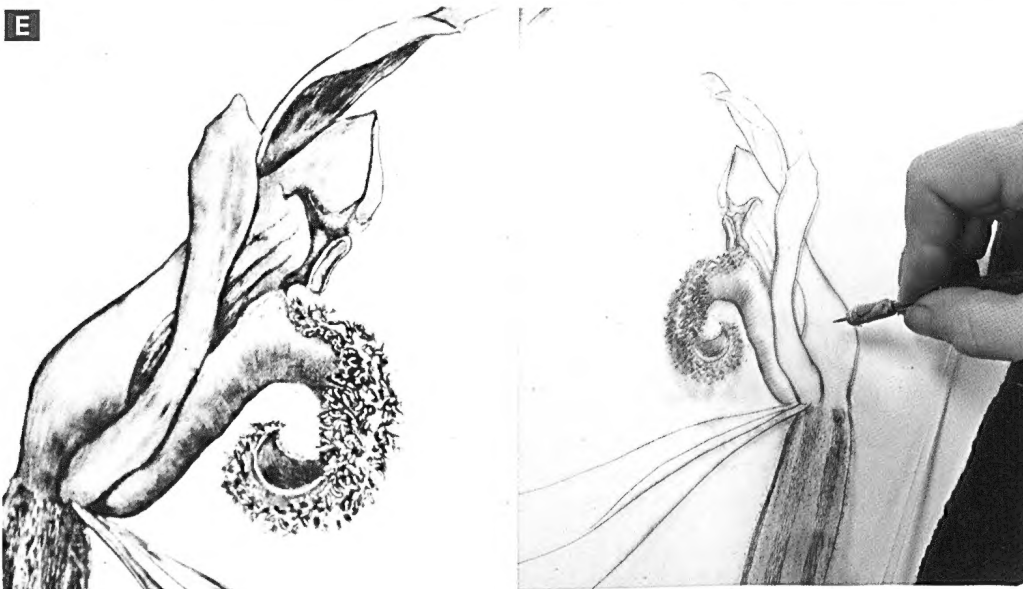
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C



D



E



Left Lune studio
etching under lens

We held working bees to build wildlife-proof ‘floppy fencing’ and hosted over 100 WWOOFers (World Wide Opportunities on Organic Farms), who helped move along our garden and building projects. Some WWOOFers have become lifelong friends. Leaving Lune River, having also birthed our two children there, was difficult. Now, I realise, I have taken my garden with me and am able to amplify it in a different way. There is an abiding connection that comes from a long time spent not talking, not interrupted, building a garden from scratch. I know this intrinsic value and I draw from the memory of it. There is nourishment in the land, and delight in respectfully learning to work with the wild.

From Versailles to Recherche Bay

While at Lune River, I collected and pressed many of the surrounding wild plants (always with permissions), building a varied collection of 190 species – not all of them from button-grass ecology; some were rainforest, marine, moss and fern species. I would press these plants, draw them under my microscope and create large-scale drypoint plates for printmaking, using my etching press.

This practice echoed the French d’Entrecasteaux expedition to Recherche Bay, which had resulted in a historical collection containing significant botanical, zoological, cartographic, geo-magnetic and ethnographic/linguistic material. The expedition’s scientists collected in the vicinity of 5,000 species and 30 genera² on this early scientific mission, which pre-dated precise methodology in the modern sense. The specimen collections of the lead naturalist, JJH Labillardière, form the backbone of Australia’s earliest herbarium collections and resulted in the first published work on the flora of Australia, the two-volume *Novae Hollandiae Plantarum Specimen*.

Louise Girardin was purser on board the d’Entrecasteaux expedition, remembered for being a woman disguised as a man. Her story is a fascinating one. Both her parents were employed at the *Potager du Roi* (King’s Garden) in Versailles and it was from here that some of the seeds in the French Garden made their way to be planted in Recherche Bay. Felix Delahaye, the d’Entrecasteaux gardener who planted that garden, went on to become Empress Josephine’s head gardener at *La Petite Malmaison*.³

Opposite

- A Bearded orchid
4 plate etching,
2m tall
- B *Calochilus robertsonii*
(bearded orchid)
- C *Drosera peltata* by
the top dam
- D Inking the *Caladenia*
alpina drypoint
plate
- E Scratching the
drypoint etching
Eriochilus cucullata

Photos Deborah Wace

² Plomley and Piard-Bernier, *The General*, 1993

³ In 2017 I went on a Churchill Fellowship to access and examine the significant botanical and illustrative collections held in herbariums in France, the UK and Italy, collected by the naturalists aboard the d’Entrecasteaux and Baudin Expeditions to Australia in the late 1700s and early 1800s. See <https://www.churchilltrust.com.au/fellow/deborah-wace-tas-2017/>



Above Mounted pressed plant assemblage

Right Public rally and walk to the Southport Lagoon Conservation area to protect the type locality of Recherche Bay

Bottom The 'Recherche Baybes', 2005 (from left: Anna Spinaze on cello, Deborah Wace, Paddy Prosser), a three-piece group (occasionally more), reached over 10,000 people at political rallies, music festivals, radio and in concert. We sang songs about some of the characters on board the ships, about the French Garden, bawdy yarns, and in between we spoke about the threat and disrespect to this area and why this touchstone to history and culture matters.

Images courtesy Deborah Wace



OPPOSITE

Above Mossy rocks delineating the 9 x 7m perimeter of the French Garden at Recherche Bay.
Photo Joe Shemesh

Bottom Bob Brown, Deborah Wace and Dick Smith at at Recherche Bay in 2006, where the campaign to protect the northeast peninsula of Recherche Bay from logging was celebrated by the many groups and individuals who worked so hard to respect our history. We won!!
Photo Laurie Fraser



Of his Tasmanian garden outlined by rocks, measuring nine by seven metres, Delahaye wrote in May 1792:

I sowed plants suitable for the season, which are celery, chervil, chicory, cabbages, grey romaine lettuce, different kinds of turnip, white onion, radishes, sorrel, peas, black salsify and potatoes. I had large quantities sown everywhere in the woods, in the more open spaces and where the soil was more friable.⁴

Unguarded from drought and grazing, only a few plants had survived upon later inspection in February 1793⁵, but this was the first attempt to cultivate vegetables in Tasmania and attentively recorded.

I really like the concept that they brought the seeds from abroad, planting expressly for future mariners but also for the native people they encountered. There is a generosity of spirit in that, which is everything about a garden. Gardeners, in general, are some of my favourite people.

Saving the French Garden

Delahaye's French Garden was re-discovered in 2003 by conservationists Helen Gee (a founder of the Tasmanian Wilderness Society) and bushman Bob Graham, igniting a local grassroots community campaign to protect Recherche Bay from the predations of industrial roads and logging. Green senators Bob Brown and Christine Milne, Tasmanian Green MP Peg Putt and archaeologist Emeritus Professor John Mulvaney, helped the community to advocate for this area; and adventuring entrepreneur Dick Smith donated money to purchase the land for the Tasmanian Land Conservancy (TLC). The years-long campaign was successful in highlighting the global value and important historical and cultural legacy of the d'Entrecasteaux expedition and the type locality of Recherche Bay. It also had a pivotal role in the development of the TLC and its important work in the custodianship of land holding significant natural, cultural and historical values.

My own involvement as a printmaker and singer/songwriter in the Recherche Bay campaign built renewed interest in the early collections of the naturalists. Art too could advocate for the respect and protection of this valuable type locality, noteworthy, including for the mapping done, the flora collected and list of *palawa kani* words made during the d'Entrecasteaux expedition.

My practice involves digitising images from my printmaking and plant specimen collection for digital printing onto fabric, to showcase this historical legacy in a contemporary context. Woven through my work is a rich narrative of plant collectors and early naturalists, deeply connected to flora and botany. This historical foundation builds a greater understanding of the significance of these early botanical collections and fosters greater respect for our flora. I delight in upscaling and hand-rendering my images of these tiny plants to make them large – to immerse you in a wonderland of Tasmanian flora, to help you look closer and forge your own connection with the spirit of country.

⁴ Duyker and Duyker, *Explorations* 37 (2004), p. 36

⁵ Labillardière, *Voyage in search of La Pérouse* (1800), p. 302



Deborah Wace will be speaking at the AGHS annual conference in Hobart in November.



Deborah Wace's art and fabric design is driven by her desire to educate about Tasmania's biodiversity, rich environmental values, unique and threatened species, and its botanical history, advocating for Tasmania's wild and endangered flora and the stories which accompany them. See her journal at www.deborahwace.com for a recommended list of further reading.





*Faithfully yours
Charles Sturt*



Margaret Phillips, BA, GDAHS

Captain Charles Sturt

Collector and cultivator as well as explorer

Left Captain Charles Sturt by Montifiore c.1830, image courtesy State Library of South Australia

Right TOP *Swainsona formosa* Sturt's desert pea, image Bill & Mark Bell, Creative Commons (CC BY-NC-SA 2.0)

Right BOTTOM Sturt desert rose, photo Anne McCutcheon

Captain Charles Sturt (1795–1869) is best known for his explorations of the Macquarie Marshes, River Murray and Central Australia; few realise his abiding passion for natural history. A Fellow of the Linnean Society of London, his journals reveal an avid interest in climate, geology, geography, flora and fauna as do his paintings of the native birds and fauna. The explorer took in earnest his task of recording, drawing and collecting specimens of newly discovered species for scientific study.

Charles Sturt's South Australian house, *The Grange*, still stands and is now known as the Charles Sturt Museum Precinct. The museum houses a significant

collection of Sturt family furniture, artefacts and historical materials related to Sturt's expeditions (1828–29 when he named the Darling River after; 1829–30, the River Murray expedition; the 1844–46 journey into central Australia) and his family. Over the past four years, the museum's private garden has been resurrected by a very small group of volunteers who are members of the Australian Garden History Society and Friends of The Grange. This effort has cast more light on Sturt's horticultural endeavours.

The collector

Sturt was a keen collector. After the River Murray expedition in 1830, he despatched three cases of specimens to a museum of Edinburgh University. The collection included 18 birds,

six emu eggs, seven sponges and four specimens of coral. His Central Australian expedition added further to the list of bird and fauna specimens and the discovery of two new flora species, which were named in his honour — Sturt's desert pea (*Swainsona formosa*) and the Sturt desert rose (*Gossypium sturtianum*).

Sturt cultivated a close friendship with John Gould, the renowned British ornithologist. Gould visited Sturt at his home in Varroville, south of Sydney, in 1838. In his 1951 book, *Charles Sturt: His Life and Journeys of Exploration*, JHL Cumpston says that Gould particularly 'admired Sturt's large original collection of watercolours of Australian parrots, for which he offered a large sum. But these paintings had been the delight of Sturt's leisure: he had collected the rarer specimens at great trouble and he would not part with them'. Sturt's appointment as Surveyor-General of South Australia in 1839 prompted another visit by Gould. For both, it was a perfect opportunity for a joint field trip into the scrublands of the River Murray, a venture that contributed to Gould's *The Birds of Australia* — the 36-volume colour-plated masterpiece published between 1840 and 1848 that recorded the bird life of Australia.

The horticulturist

Sturt's passion went beyond the natural environment. In 1836, he served on the first Committee of Superintendence of the Australian Museum and Botanic Gardens in Sydney. His property at Mittagong, New South Wales covered 789 hectares, which *The Sydney Herald* reported on 7 December 1837 had an excellent garden. (It was sold in 1838.) A year later Sturt purchased the farm of 405 hectares at Varroville in NSW, which Cumpston explains was to 'gratify his passion for gardening'.

On arrival in Adelaide in 1839 Sturt was appointed a Vice-President of the inaugural Agricultural and Horticultural Society of South Australia and later held the same position in the South Australia Agricultural Society and the Botanical and Horticultural Board. His land grant of two 32-ha sections on the headwaters of the Port River in the Reedbeds to the west of Adelaide provided the means to indulge his passion for horticulture. The land stretched to the dunes and the sea. Dissected by a bountiful creek and on a flood plain of loam and well-drained sandy soil. The property, *The Grange*, eventually grew to a 155-ha mixed farm producing barley and oats, while sustaining horses, cows, pigs, ducks,



The Grange, from the front, photo Peter Richards

chickens, partridges and bees. Sturt cultivated a vast orchard of 4,000 fruit trees — pear, orange, lemon, apple, peach, fig and vines. In the book *Life of Charles Sturt after Sturt* (1899), his daughter-in-law Beatrix Sturt notes how much 'he delighted in wandering over his garden with his two beautiful boys Napier [Beatrix's husband] and Charles'. The biography references Sturt's own letters to illustrate his horticultural interests.

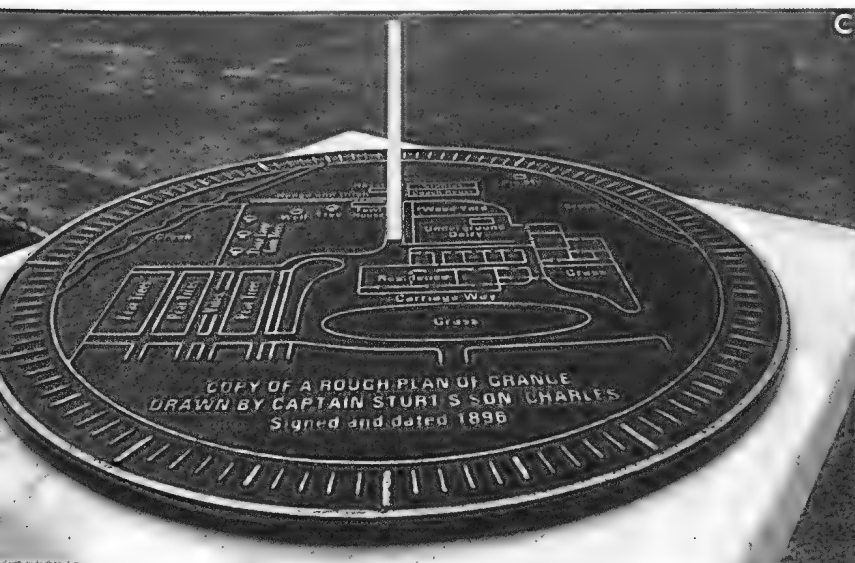
The cultivator

Those letters reveal that Sturt wrote to his old friend George Macleay at Brownlow Hill, Camden, New South Wales, requesting him to send bulbs and couch grass for *The Grange*, as well as seeds of *Cupressus callitris*, the white cedar, and loquat. Sturt is reputed to have introduced (now pervasive) couch grass into South Australia. From Loddiges in London he received 'some fine fuchsias, laurel, chestnut and white roses' and several times in 1842, he sought fruit, flower seeds and bulbs from his brother William in India, instructing him in September to 'put the cuttings into a box with damp moss or into a barrel and saturate the whole well just before you close it up. They will shoot no doubt but I shall be able to save some for the seeds, put them in dried sand — and send the seeds of ornamental shrubs and trees...If an opportunity should offer of sending direct from Calcutta send a case of plants — pineapples, bananas, arrowroot, sugar cane — but at all risks send me some indigo seed in your letter.'

In October 1842 he wrote to William that a flood had wiped out his garden. 'Oranges, lemons, figs, 1,800 vines and more than 3,000 trees of all kinds are killed.' Not to be deterred, he tells William, 'Dr Wallick's two cases of plants for our Horticultural Society came in excellent order.



- A The garden in 1905, photo Mabel Hardy
- B The garden today, with cosmos, one of Sturt's favourites, photo Richard Nolan
- C Charles Sheppey Sturt's 1896 garden plan reproduced in Casson, M (1990), *The Story of Grange*, and shown on the sundial in the heritage garden, photo Margaret Phillips



A

None of those you sent me did I ever get, much to my mortification...Send me melon seeds of varieties, pumpkins, Bengal chillies and any other. I want to try indigo, cotton and other things. Forward them via Sydney, addressed for me to the care of Major H. Smyth there.'

Finding clues about *The Grange's* garden

We will never really know the exact plan of Sturt's garden, farmyard and orchards. In 1896 Captain Sturt's son, Charles Sheppey, drew a plan for Beatrix to assist her when she was writing her biography. The plan, drawn from childhood memory, denotes some of the plantings, particularly trees and vines. We do know that Sturt planted artichokes, oleander, Brown Turkey fig, heliotrope, fuchsia, and ferns including *Asplenium australis*, *A. marinum* and woodsia but the plan lacks detail.

The present-day Charles Sturt Museum in the suburb of Grange holds some relics of Sturt's gardening activity: pressed flowers, ink drawings, plant lists and instructions for planting, and a list of largely Australian native trees and shrubs planted at *The Grange* in 1842. In conjunction with the launch of the Museum in 1967, a diverse collection of 10 packets of seeds arrived back in Adelaide with other Sturt family memorabilia. They are labelled:

- *Acacia decurrens* (black wattle)
- Asters (two packets)
- Blue hardenbergia
- White hardenbergia
- Hardenbergia King George Sound WA
- Poppy
- Cosmos
- Hibiscus or Sturt Rose
- *Clanthus dampieri* (Sturt's Desert Pea)

C



While now named *Swainsona formosa*, in the 18th century it was placed in the genus *Clianthus* (as *Clianthus dampieri*). It later also became known as *C. formosus*. Specimens were collected by William Dampier, who recorded his first sighting on 22 August 1699 on Rosemary Island off the Pilbara in Western Australia. The common name commemorates Sturt, who made several references to the plant in his journal, *Narrative of an Expedition into Central Australia*, including: 'We saw that beautiful flower the *Clianthus formosa* [sic] in splendid blossom on the plains. It was growing amid barrenness and decay, but its long runners were covered with flowers that gave a crimson tint to the ground'.



Above Sturt's desert pea growing in *The Grange's* heritage garden, photo Anne McCutcheon

Left Black wattle seeds sent to the museum in 1967 and now conserved and housed in the museum's archive, photo Margaret Phillips



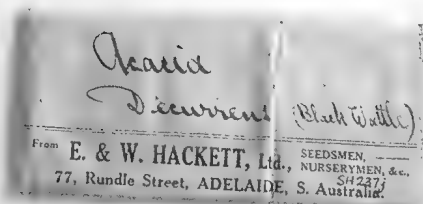
The heritage garden

The Charles Sheppey Sturt plan of 1896 has guided the design of the current garden, though having to work around mature (not original) eucalypts and olives has limited some features. Plantings are based on references to the garden in various publications, remaining plant lists, drawings and seeds in the museum collection and use of local catalogues such as that of FC Davis Nursery in the Reedbeds (1862), Bailey's Hackney Nursery (1845), as well as the Brownlow Hill plant lists, given George Macleay's friendship with Charles Sturt's family in his days farming in New South Wales.

The garden remains a work in progress. It is being adapted to current climate conditions, a change to the course of the creek and the very close urban neighbourhood. The garden is a memorial to Captain Charles Sturt's desire to create a little piece of paradise for his family. It has also been a catalyst for a new exhibition, 'The Art of Nature', that will trace Sturt's fascination with the natural world, to be launched in August 2022 on the completion of a new Visitor Centre.

Some of the seeds are in folded paper or envelopes, others are in brown paper seed packets from E&W Hackett Nursery of 77 Rundle St, Adelaide, suggesting these seeds and perhaps others had been sent to the Sturts after their departure from Australia in 1853 for their garden in Cheltenham, Gloucestershire.

Books donated to the Charles Sturt Museum highlight Sturt's scientific approach to gardening, which continued when he returned to England. The library collection includes five volumes of *Familiar Wild Flowers* by FE Hulme published from 1877–1885, 15 volumes of Paxton's *Magazine of Botany* (1834–1849), *The Management of Bees* by Samuel Bagster (1835) and *British Ferns and Their Allies* by Thomas Moore (1859).



- Honorary curator at the Charles Sturt Memorial Trust, **Margaret Phillips**, is a research historian, author of *Meet You at the Gilby*, *History of the Gilberton Amateur Swimming Club 1915–2015*; *A Smile, a Wave and a Word*, *A Hundred Years at Alberton School*; and curator of museum exhibitions *A House with a History* and *Men of the Central Expedition*.





Glenn R Cooke

'The rough end of the pineapple' A Queensland cultural landscape

LWK Wirth (1858-1950), 'A Queensland industry', 1893 oil on canvas, 64cm x 76.5cm, Queensland Art Gallery/ Gallery of Modern Art. This is the first identified painting of pineapple cultivation in Australia.

Queensland 'owns' the pineapple. The state's eastern seaboard has a distinctive range of tropical agricultural products but only a few, such as pineapples, are in such extensive cultivation as to provide a distinctive regional identity. Queensland also 'owns' the expression 'the rough end of the pineapple'. According to the 2006 *Oxford English Dictionary*, its earliest use was in *The Piccadilly Bushman* by the Australian playwright Ray Lawler (staged 1959, published 1961). However, the expression was around before that: the American circus performer Emmett Kelly employed the phrase in 1954, possibly having picked it up from one of the several hundred thousand American soldiers who passed through Queensland during the Second World War. Closer to home, the local Member for Whitsunday, Lloyd HS Roberts, had used it in a speech delivered to the Queensland Parliament in 1950.

Pineapples (a type of bromeliad) are native to the dry inland forests of South America. During the 18th century, they became a prestige fruit cultivated in heated glasshouses in England. Because they were prominently displayed on the dining tables of the wealthy, they became a symbol of hospitality. It was in this connection that the pineapple was used on the cedar sideboard carved by Matthew Fern for *Glengallan* homestead in Warwick in 1868.

The First Fleet probably took pineapple plants aboard at Rio de Janeiro on the voyage south and, in 1824, pineapples were part of the provisions landed at Redcliffe in what was to become the state of Queensland. The settlement quickly shifted to the current site of Brisbane. Within five years, the Colonial Botanist Charles Fraser listed pineapples among the crops growing in the six-ha government garden. Brisbane's climate was benign and pineapples became a standard planting in small holdings. During the 1840s, commercial plantings were established by German Lutheran missionaries at Nundah, north of the city of Brisbane. These are likely the fields depicted by LWK Wirth in 'A Queensland industry' (p.14). Painted representations of agricultural industries are rare in Australian art, as the new medium of photography was more usually used to capture its development. A photograph depicting the daughter of John Nicholson with part of their pineapple crop at Grovely, Brisbane dates from 1864. Photographs of pineapple cultivation as far afield as Bowen and Cardwell soon proliferated and images on newly popular postcards signified a distinct Queensland connection.



Queensland's pineapple industry

Although *The Moreton Bay Courier* reported the export of two cases of pineapples in 1847, these were for the Australian market, as shipments from the Bahamas and the Azores were better placed to cater for the European market. Fifty years later in the three-week period ending 11 September 1903, *Brisbane Shipping Trade* shows that 1,728 crates of fresh pineapples were sent to Sydney and 1,257 to Melbourne, which in terms of exporting is modest. (Melbourne had a more significant interest in the canned product with 686 crates shipped.) Brisbane's *The Daily Mail* promoted the crop on 2 February 1923: 'The pineapple — the queen fruit of this Queen State of the Commonwealth — is now in season!'

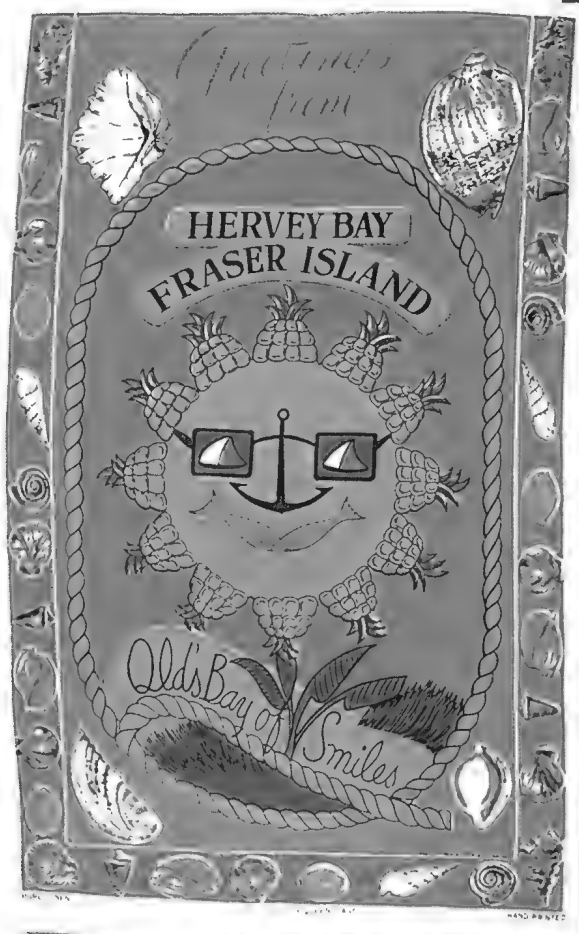
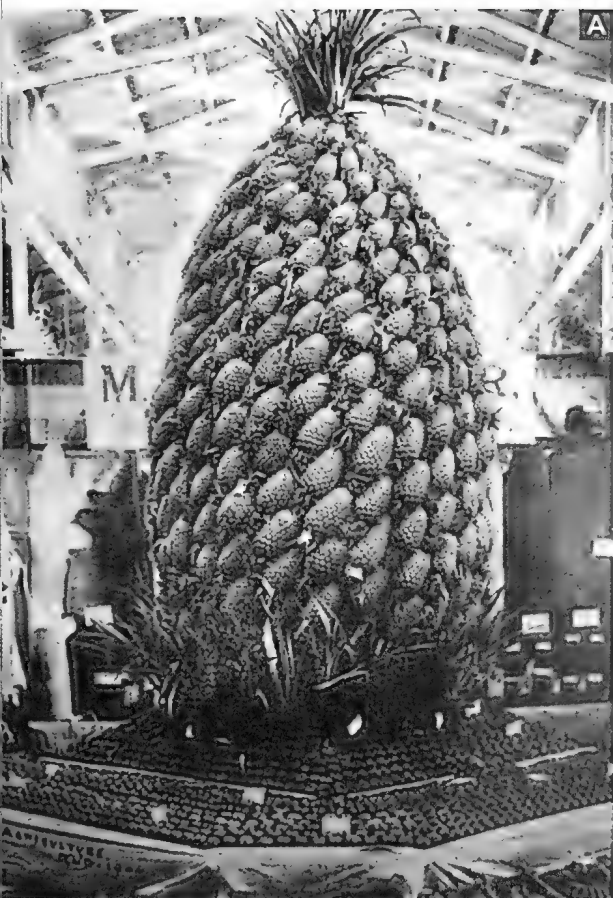
The principal growing areas were southeast Queensland (until the farms around Brisbane were taken over by suburban development) the North Coast (today known as the

Sunshine Coast), Maryborough and Wide Bay, Yeppoon and North Queensland, including Mareeba and Mossman. Pineapples were growing in the Rockhampton area by the 1890s but it was quickly realised that canning a seasonal crop was not as profitable as the Lake Creek's Meatworks, which were able to operate all year round. Although a trial shipment of canned fruit was sent overseas from the Queensland Pineapple Company's new factory on the North Coast Line in 1892, the small factories that sprang up in Brisbane, such as RC Verney & Sons, Fortitude Valley, and along the coastline, could never hope to compete with the vast output of those based in Singapore.

The situation changed in the 1947 when Queensland Tropical Fruits Product's dedicated pineapple cannery (later trading under the brand name 'Golden Circle') was opened in the

Top Sideboard at *Glengallan*, 1868, image Queensland Art Gallery/Gallery of Modern Art

Bottom Queensland's association with the pineapple is conveyed by the menu for the banquet held in July 1920 by the Queensland Government for the Prince of Wales in Brisbane (even though pineapples were out of season), image State Library of Queensland



Brisbane suburb of Northgate by the Premier, the Hon Edward Hanlon. Initially producing 40,000 tonnes of canned pineapple a year, it expanded production to include fruit salad, tropical jams and fruit juice, cordials and soft drinks and now produces more than 150,000 tonnes a year. I can recall as a small child seeing carriages packed with pineapples at Yeppoon waiting to be transported to Northgate for processing. A second cannery operated briefly at Koongal near Rockhampton.

A cultural icon

By the first part of the 20th century, the pineapple became integrated into community events, fundraisers and festivals. Miss Ivy Bell's presence as Pineapple Queen at the 1923 Buderim Show was a grand affair. Her entourage included a carriage lead by two mounted returned soldiers, maids of honour, Wynnie Dyble and Ellen Crack, and train bearers Cliff Whiteway and Sydney Clarke. Smaller events were held in Wamuran in 1927, and Kadanga in the years 1959 to 1979. The Pinefest, Yeppoon, which began in 1962, is still functioning.



Anne M Graham (b.1925), 'Pineapple farm with cloud', 2009, oil on linen 85xcm x' 125cm, reproduced with permission of the artist. The painting of Mt Tibrogargan, one of the Glasshouse Mountains, shows the gently rolling country and the red soil that is ideal for the cultivation of pineapples.

In the early 1950s the North Coast produced 75 per cent of Queensland's crop. A signal of this predominance was the Golden Pineapple Festival. The inaugural event was sponsored by the Great North Coast Show Society in Nambour and grew into a district-wide movement. The final day of the 1955 festival on 7 May saw a contingent of nine floats bearing contestants from local farming communities. Hazel Potter (Maroochydore) was crowned by Minister CG McCathic that evening.

With tourism on the Sunshine Coast developing in the 1960s, the potential of the pineapple as a draw card was soon realised. The Big Pineapple opened in 1971. The 15m replica with the rough leaf crown contained two floors with audio-visual displays about Queensland's tropical agricultural production. From its observation deck visitors had a view of the other attractions, including a miniature sugarcane train that took people on a tour of the pineapple fields.

Australian grown

The viability of the industry began to be undermined with the importation of cheap Asian pineapples in 1989. Golden Circle was purchased in 2008 by Heinz Australia (which donated the company records to the State Library of Queensland). By the time acclaimed Queensland playwright, Norman Price's darkly comic play, *The pineapple queen*, was produced for Brisbane's La Boîte Theatre Company in 2009, the 'golden years' of the pineapple industry and Queenslanders' personal connections were enveloped in nostalgia.

All she ever wanted was to be crowned the Glasshouse District's Pineapple Queen – wearing a magnificent dress, riding on a float down the main street of Nambour, waving at an adoring crowd, and catching the eye of a handsome young man – a glamorous new life away from the confines of the farm she grew upon with her cruel father.

Luckily Australian-grown pineapples are still plentiful. Smooth Cayenne is the traditional variety canned by Golden Circle; Queen is the sweet, old-fashioned 'rough skin' fruit; Hybrid 73-50 was developed in Hawaii and is now marketed as Aussi Gold (it is usually seen in supermarkets without its 'rough end') and Queensland-bred Aus-Jubilee is now grown commercially. Although the output of Queensland farmers is much reduced, Pinata Farms at Wamuran in the Moreton Bay region is Australia's largest pineapple producer.

Art and social historian **Glenn R Cooke** was appointed as the first Curator of Decorative Arts at the Queensland Art Gallery in 1981 and retired as Research Curator, Queensland Heritage in 2013. He has been actively involved with the AGHS since 1995 and continues to publish extensively on visual culture. He is also an enthusiastic collector, gardener and ballroom dancer.



Opposite

- A Postcard from the 1906 Royal National Association (Ekka) showing the pineapple trophy, courtesy the author
- B Float for the Cooe Bay Progress Association, Pinefest, Yeppoon 1969, photo K Matthews, courtesy the Central Coast Historical Society
- C Souvenir tea towel, author's collection
- D The Queensland Government promoted the new cannery at Northgate by giving 500 crates of tinned pineapple as a wedding gift to Princess Elizabeth in 1947. For generations of migrants Golden Circle was their first employer in Queensland. Image Queensland State Archives

The rise of the lady gardener

One aspect of female emancipation

Julie Campbell

In 1845 the Birmingham toolmaker Richard Timmins advertised a Ladies' Garden Tool Set that included a trowel especially designed for a smaller hand. Timmins was not the only one to anticipate the rise of the lady gardener. In 1840, Jane Loudon, wife of garden designer and writer John Claudius Loudon, published *Instructions in Gardening for Ladies*. The book sold 200,000 copies, 1,300 on the first day of publication. Loudon went on to write four more books, in which she encouraged her readers to take an active role in gardening, pointing out that women could dig and prune as well as men.

Women's interest in gardening, including as a profession, is one aspect of the 19th-century movement for female emancipation. This interest was fuelled by new educational opportunities. In 1865 Lady Frances Wolseley founded Glynde College for Lady Gardeners in Sussex.

Her students were to 'assist as far as their strength allows, by lending intelligence, good taste and refinement towards better cultivation of this great country of ours'.

In 1898 Daisy Greville, Countess of Warwick and former mistress of the Prince of Wales, established Studley College for Women, for 'earnest-minded women' to learn to garden.

Among her students was the suffragette Adela Pankhurst who subsequently travelled to Australia to organise the Women's Peace

Army in Melbourne. There she also became involved in the Women's Rural Industries Cooperative Project, a program that operated from 1915 to 1917 to enable women to become independent fruit and vegetable growers. One of the project leaders was Ina Higgins the first female graduate of Burnley Horticultural College.

Higgins knew what it was like to break social conventions of the time. She is described by

Sandra Pullman as 'landscape gardener, pacifist, and women's political activist' (*La Trobe Journal*, State Library of Victoria, March 2017). In 1898 Higgins had lobbied Charles Luffman, the Principal of Burnley Horticultural College, to allow her to attend lectures. He agreed on the condition that she found six more women who would be interested. By enrolment time Higgins had found 72. After topping her class, she went on to establish a reputation as a garden designer and to advocate horticulture as a suitable career for women.

With more educational opportunities and greater social freedom, women were better able to follow their interest in plants as collectors, botanists, painters, and as gardeners. Talented women emerged ready for professional careers in fields previously thought exclusively open to men. Two of these, Gertrude Jekyll (1843–1932) in England and Edna Walling (1912–1973) in Australia, established reputations through their professional practice and writing. Their lives spanned a period of two world wars and significant social and political change.

Keep an eye out for the Friends of Burnley Gardens new book (to which the AGHS Victoria branch has contributed) due to be released later this year, ***Burnley Gardens and the people who loved them***. It's about Burnley Gardens and the designers who created them, providing fascinating new historical material on the Gardens and the role women have played in their development.

If you would like further information, please contact the author, Michele Adler on

michele@adland.com.au



Jane Loudon contended that 'any lady who can design a pattern and embroider a gown, might... be taught to design a flower garden with as much skill and taste as a professional landscape gardener' image Wikipedia



The arched gateway, here leading to the rose garden at Old Linton, Yass, was typical of the Arts and Craft fashion. Jekyll also used gateways, garden rooms and flagstone paths in her designs.

Photo Kirsty Campbell

Neither Jekyll nor Walling were revolutionary in outlook but each showed what was possible when women were allowed to pursue higher education and, by 1902 in Australia, to vote.

Gertrude Jekyll

In 1861 Gertrude Jekyll enrolled as a student at the South Kensington School of Art in London. She was a talented painter, exhibiting at the Royal Academy in 1865. Supported by a well-to-do family, Jekyll was able to travel widely in Europe and North Africa. Her social circle included artists, among them the architect H Inigo Triggs, whose brother, Arthur Bryant Triggs, had moved to Australia. His brother's garden, in Yass, New South Wales, incorporates design elements of the Arts and Crafts movement that Inigo admired.

When Jekyll's eyesight began to fail, she turned from painting to horticulture. In 1883, she bought land to establish her own house and garden, *Munstead Wood*. When she met the architect Edwin Lutyens in 1890, she asked him to design a house to complement the garden. This project led to a professional partnership during which the pair designed more than 100 houses and gardens.

Jekyll used Arts and Crafts landscape features such as those at *Old Linton* in Yass, NSW, although she paid far more attention to plantings that emphasised colour, light and space, reflecting her training as a painter. Jekyll's interest in

traditional plants began in her country childhood but was further encouraged by William Robinson, the highly influential Irish horticulturist. Robinson's book *The English Flower Garden*, 1883, to which Jekyll contributed a chapter, was highly critical of the mass plantings of showy exotic annuals that had become fashionable in late Victorian gardens. As Jekyll was to write in *Colour in the Flower Garden* (1908), 'the possession of a quantity of plants...does not make a garden; it only makes a collection'. The careful selection and placement of plants was a fine art that created a place of 'perfect rest and refreshment of mind and body'.

In her time, Gertrude Jekyll was regarded by many as an amateur. Being a woman of independent means it was unthinkable that she needed paid work; some of her clients never did pay for her careful planning and planting. Nevertheless she ran the business side of her gardening so efficiently that the sale of plants from her nursery covered the wages of its gardeners. There was also an income from her writing: 15 books and hundreds of newspaper and journal articles written to encourage home gardeners.

Edna Walling

Following in the tradition of Jekyll and Robinson was Edna Walling, one of Australia's most influential landscape designers. Walling was born in London in 1896. Her family moved to New Zealand and then to Melbourne where



Edna Walling, wearing pants tucked into long socks, shirt tucked into pants and an akubra hat, photographer unknown, image State Library of Victoria, Walling Archive. Walling loved the Australian landscape. Her interest in roadside plants resulted in her book, *The Australian Roadside* (1952).

she enrolled at Burnley College in 1916. After graduating she worked as a jobbing gardener, forming a particular interest in stone walls, which would become a hallmark of her garden designs.

Perhaps as compensation for the son he had wanted, Walling's father instructed her on aspects of building and surveying. This proved most useful when, in the 1920s, she bought land on the outskirts of Melbourne and built a house for herself called *Sonning*. The rest of the land was subdivided into 16 plots to be sold on the condition that Walling design both the cottage and garden on each site. This created a village called Bickleigh Vale.¹

Calling herself a landscape gardener rather than landscape architect, Walling established her business with the help of contractors Eric Hammond and Ellis Stones, the stone mason and garden designer. She also wrote for *Australian Home Beautiful* (1926–1946), answering readers' questions and even designing gardens on request. Among her earliest commissions were gardens for Dame Nellie Melba and Dame Elisabeth Murdoch, who recalls feeling intimidated by Walling, whom her husband, Sir Keith Murdoch, had appointed in 1930 to develop the garden at Cruden Farm.

While she could be determined and demanding of her clients, Walling was generous with ideas. Her writing made her well known and respected. Echoing a principle of Jekyll design, she emphasised the need for gardens to be restful and harmonious, saying in *Gardens in Australia: their design and care*, 1943, she was writing for 'those who would make their gardens a place of repose for mind and body'.

Benefits and barriers

Despite advances in their access to tertiary education in the mid-20th century, women could still face barriers to pursuing their chosen profession. Young Shirley Howes' ambition in the late 1940s to be an artist and a writer was not supported by her father. Undaunted, she paid her own way through Brisbane Technical College Art School and gained a Diploma in Fine Art, then supplementing her income by selling paintings, mostly of flowers and gardens. Nor could she have studied horticulture at that time, because Gatton Agricultural College in Queensland only accepted men. In 1964, she moved to Sydney with her husband, John Stackhouse, and enrolled at Ryde School of Agriculture in 1970, when her youngest child started school. In her first year there were 17 women and 32 men. In the second year the numbers of men and women were equal.

Stackhouse went on to a career in broadcasting and writing, her six books going into second editions and her newspaper and magazine articles reaching a wide audience. Through television and radio she became trusted garden adviser to the owners of quarter-acre blocks. Her first column in *The Sydney Morning Herald* was introduced as '...of special interest to women gardeners as well as men'.

With the rise of lady gardeners had come opportunities for independent professional careers. The writings of Jekyll, Walling and Stackhouse have inspired others to understand more about plants and more about the pleasures of gardening.



Walling referred to her creation at Mawarra, Sherbrooke, Victoria as 'a symphony of steps and beautiful trees'. House from the reflection pool, photograph taken in 1938 or 1939, State Library of Victoria, Walling Archive



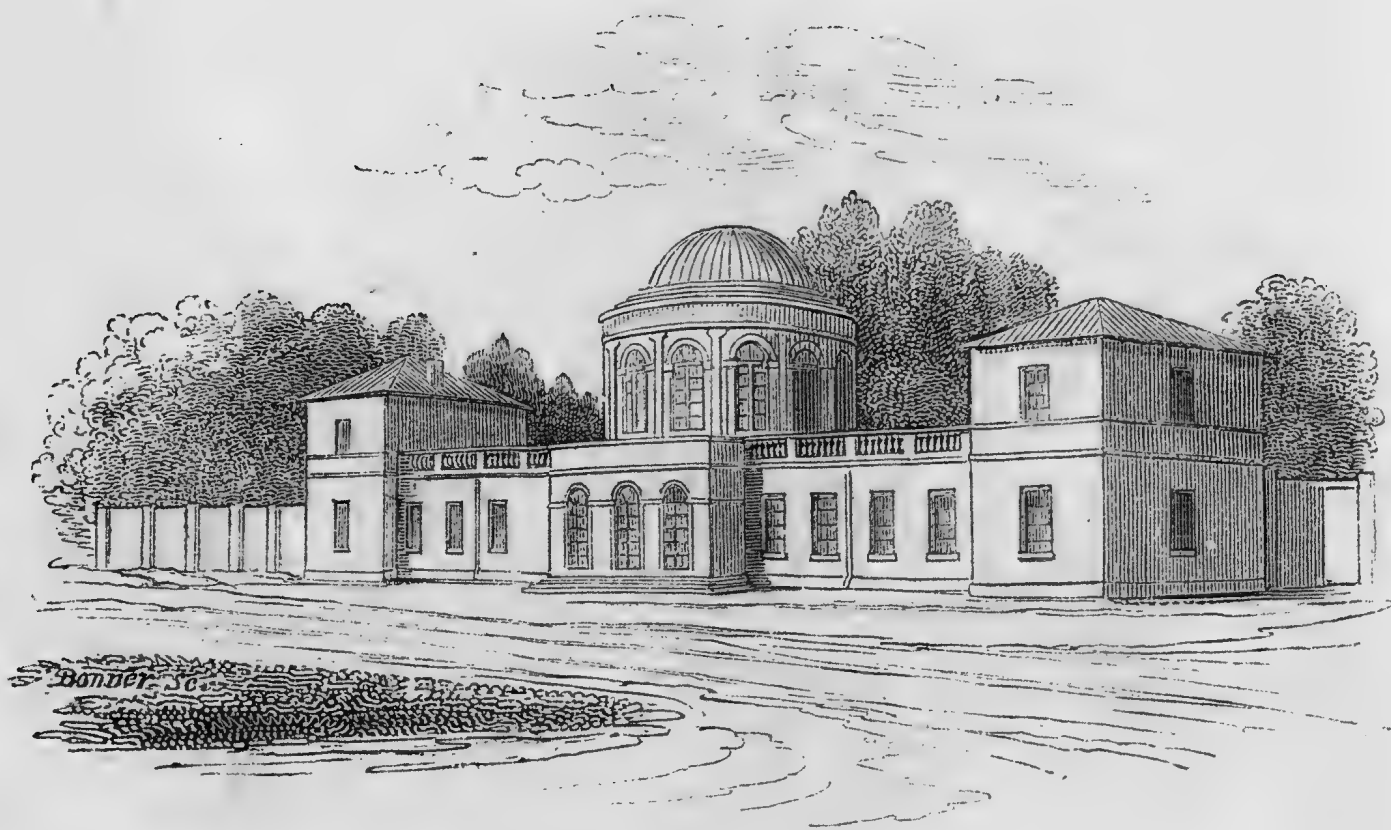
Left Shirley Stackhouse as a student in Brisbane in the 1940s, image courtesy Jennifer Stackhouse

Shirley Stackhouse OAM talked about her career in an interview with Roslyn Burge in 2006. She concluded that interview recalling: 'When I was a child my relatives...were always asking what I was going to do when I grew up and I always used to say...I was going to be a writer and I was going to be an artist and then they would all laugh. And my uncles, to make me say this would give me a penny, so I used to think it was worth being laughed at... to get the penny because a penny was a big amount of money in those days'.

See the AGHS's National Oral History Collection:
<https://www.gardenhistorysociety.org.au/publications/shirley-stackhouse-oam/>

On retirement from an academic career, **Julie Campbell, Ed D** moved to Yass in 2015. There she was garden manager at *Cooma Cottage* from 2016 to 2018. Her interest in local gardens and gardeners culminated in the publication of *A garden history of Yass town*, 2021, co-edited with Dr Aedeen Cremin.





The Golden Cupola at Herrnhausen.

John Leslie Dowe and Boris Oliver Schlumpberger

‘Neuholländische’ wattles and other legumes at the Royal Gardens of Herrenhausen, Germany 1797–1852

The Library Building at Herrenhausen, circa 1820, where the Wendlands lived and worked. The exterior has been preserved and the building presently functions as administration offices, image with permission of the Historisches Museum Hannover

When one thinks of the horticulture and taxonomy of Australian legumes such as *Acacia*, *Glycine* and *Pultenaea*, little would our minds go to Germany in the late 18th and early 19th centuries. Yet, historically important work on ‘Neuholländische’ plants was underway at the Berggarten, one of the component gardens of the Royal Gardens of Herrenhausen at Hannover in Germany. Between them, royal gardeners Johann Christoph Wendland (1755–1828) and his son and successor, Heinrich Ludolph Wendland (1792–1869), described about 50 new species of Australian legumes, many from plants grown in the Berggarten. Here we explore the connection between the description of new Australian species and how they came to be cultivated and studied in Germany soon after the colonisation of Australia.

Following the colonisation of Australia in the later decades of the 18th century, Australian plants were being rapidly acquired for European gardens such as Kew Gardens in England, Napoleon and Josephine's Chateau de Malmaison near Paris and the Royal Gardens of Herrenhausen, Hannover, among others. Australian plants were considered to be the essence of exoticism, uniquely strange and prime subjects for novel botanical research.

Although the Royal Gardens of Herrenhausen did not employ any botanical field collectors, Australian plants were obtained from other gardens that had sourced plants from their own collectors or from colonial residents who were supplying plants or seeds. Apart from professional collectors who were active in Australia during the late 18th century and early 19th century, commercial horticultural firms such as Loddiges & Sons and Lee & Kennedy promoted Australian plants and were the distributors of many of the earliest introductions into European horticulture.

At the turn of the 19th century, the Royal Gardens of Herrenhausen were among the most advanced in Germany. They had been established as a summer palace in 1666 for Duke Johann Friedrich of the House of Hannover. Over the next few decades, and under the direction of Duke Ernst August, the lands around the palace were developed as ornamental pleasure gardens, with fountains and formal paths, in addition to gardens for the production of food and flowers for the royal household. It was during this time that the baroque-style Great Garden was established and which is now the garden for which Herrenhausen is most famous. It is considered one of the best examples of this type of garden in Europe.

The Wendland dynasty

The Wendland dynasty of court gardeners commenced in the 1790s and soon became active in the cultivation and botanical study of a number of Australian plant families. For example, the founding patriarch of the dynasty, Johann Christoph Wendland (1755–1828), first described the Australian endemic genera *Angianthus* (Asteraceae), *Hakea* (Proteaceae) and *Waitzia* (Asteraceae), while Heinrich Ludolph Wendland (1792–1869) focused



Acacia ulicifolia (as *Mimosa ulicifolia*),
Wendland, JC (1808), *Collectio plantarum
tam exoticarum* 1: tab. 6



Dillwynia retorta (as *Pultenaea retorta*),
Wendland, JC (1798), *Hortus Herrenhusanus*
13: tab. 9



Pultenaea daphnoides, Wendland, JC (1798),
Hortus Herrenhusanus 7: tab. 17



Pultenaea linophylla (as *P. bracteata* in error),
Wendland, JC (1797), *Sertum Hannoveranum*
1, 28: tab. 18

Together with the 'pea-flowered' plants and another group, which includes *Senna* and *Cassia*, acacias are legumes and are able to take-up their nutrient requirements for nitrogen directly from the atmosphere with the aid of soil bacteria (*Rhizobium* sp.).

Australian Native Plants Society <http://anpsa.org.au/acacia1.html>

on describing new species, mainly in *Acacia* (Fabaceae) and *Leptospermum* (Myrtaceae). A third Wendland, Hermann (1825–1903), son of Heinrich and grandson of Johann, continued the family dynasty of royal gardeners at Herrenhausen and became the world's leading specialist for the palm family. In total, the three generations of Wendlands described about 150 species of Australian plants. However, the rigours of synonymisation and the designation of names according to the *International Code of Botanical Nomenclature* have resulted in only 30 being the currently accepted names.

Although there are no surviving detailed records that deal specifically with the acquisition and cultivation of Australian species at the Berggarten, it is known that in the mid-19th century there was a greenhouse for the larger Australian plants, and a hotbed for the smaller plants. In addition, other Australian plants were kept in the so-called Ericaceae greenhouse, designated for 'heath and small New Holland plants'. Most of these plants were kept outside during the summer months, then moved into the heated greenhouses and frames in autumn. In 1830, 87 accessions of *Acacia* were listed for the Berggarten. In Hermann Wendland's guidebook of the gardens published in 1852, he does not refer specifically to a collection of acacias but mentions especially large and beautiful plants of *Acacia floribunda* and *A. verticillata*. He also observes that Australian plants were kept in 'various beds', including species of *Eucalyptus*, *Leptospermum*, *Melaleuca*, *Cordyline* and *Kunzea*. As well there was a collection of Australian Proteaceae.

Some of the later work by Heinrich Ludolph Wendland on *Acacia* was based on herbarium specimens as well as living plants. The specimens were held in the private Herrenhausen Herbarium, which in 1969 was donated to the University of Göttingen.

The results of the study conducted by the Wendlands on the Australian wattles and their relatives were mainly presented in publications associated with Herrenhausen Gardens. The publications were in Latin, the language of botanical research of that era. They were mostly lavish productions and most of the species treatments were accompanied by detailed diagnostic illustrations. Many of these were prepared by Johann Christoph Wendland, who was an accomplished and productive illustrator.

The works on the 'Neuholländische' legumes are amongst the Wendlands' most productive taxonomic endeavours. They made a significant

contribution to the early taxonomy of this group of plants, and therefore to a greater understanding of Australian flora. The currently accepted names of the legume species they described are presented in the table.

Currently accepted names of Australian legume species that were first described by Johann Christoph Wendland and/or Heinrich Ludolph Wendland

<i>Acacia amoena</i>
<i>Acacia binervia</i> (as <i>Mimosa binervia</i>)
<i>Acacia crassiuscula</i>
<i>Acacia longissima</i>
<i>Acacia mucronata</i>
<i>Dillwynia retorta</i> (as <i>Pultenaea retorta</i>)
<i>Glycine clandestina</i>
<i>Pultenaea daphnoides</i>
<i>Pultenaea linophylla</i>
<i>Viminaria juncea</i> (as <i>Sophora juncea</i>)

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Dr John Leslie Dowe of the Australian Tropical Herbarium, James Cook University, Cairns, is a specialist in the taxonomy and history of Australian palms, and has recently completed research on the Wendlands' Australian plant specimens held in the herbarium at Göttingen University, Germany.



Dr Boris Oliver Schlumpberger of Herrenhausen Gardens, Hannover, Germany, is a cactus specialist interested in systematics, evolution and pollination ecology. In the Berggarten at Herrenhausen he curates one of the world's largest orchid collections, amongst other plants.





John Dwyer

Agapanthus praecox ssp. *orientalis*

Agapanthus, African lily

Agapanthus is from the Greek, *agape*, love, and *anthos*, flower. Many have shared a great affection for the splendid flowers, introduced widely, including to England and Europe, from the 17th century. A painting by Claude Aubriet (c.1665–1742), the famous botanical artist appointed royal painter by the Sun King, Louis XIV, shows that the plant, under the pre-Linnean name *Agapanthus umbellatus*, was under cultivation in the Jardin du Roi in Paris in 1700.

Native to the Cape Province of South Africa, *Agapanthus praecox* is an erect, clump-forming, perennial evergreen herb that grows to about 60 cm high and 1 m wide, with thick fleshy underground stems or rhizomes. The strap-like

leaves are a glossy green and exude a poisonous gelatinous substance when broken. The flowers, appearing from November to February, are blue or white umbels or spherical clusters at the tops of smooth thick stems up to 1.5 m high. The fruit is a leathery oblong, angular capsule that dries to pale brown, splitting open to release 20 to 100 winged black seeds. According to *Botanica* (1997), 'Its glorious starbursts of lavender-blue flowers appear in summer, and its densely clumped evergreen foliage is handsome in the garden all year round'. The entry describes agapanthus as ideal for background plants or for edging along a wall, fence or driveway.

A. praecox ssp. *orientalis* is the most commonly grown species, although other varieties, cultivars and hybrids of agapanthus have been developed as garden or landscape plants, with more than 20 receiving the Royal Horticultural Society's Award

Agapanthus on the
île-de-Bréhat, Brittany,
image Shutterstock

of Garden Merit. The Society's *Dictionary of Gardening* (1999) notes: 'Hybridisation occurs so readily that all garden forms may be hybrids and it has been suggested (McNeil 1972) that *Agapanthus* consists of one variable species'.

The *Weeds Australia* website says that the history of the introduction of agapanthus to Australia is unknown. The record does show it was on sale at Rule's Nursery in Richmond from 1855 and at numerous other nurseries in Victoria, such as Brunnings, from the 1860s. Three varieties of agapanthus were under cultivation in the Melbourne Botanic Gardens in 1883.

The first Australian gardening book produced by a woman, *The Flower Garden in Australia: a book for ladies and amateurs* by Mrs Rolf Boldrewood (1893), includes agapanthus: 'Hardy ornamental bulbs that will grow in mostly any soil, making showy plants in the open borders; doing well in cold or warm climates; increased by division of crowns'. Mrs Rolf Boldrewood was in fact Margaret Browne (c.1837–1917), wife of Thomas Browne (1826–1915), famous as the author (using the pseudonym Rolf Boldrewood) of *Robbery Under Arms* (1888).

The self-described 'most ambitious enterprise in the literature of gardens and gardening that Australia has known', *Australian Gardening of To-day* (sic, published in the 1940s), included an encyclopaedic section with an entry on agapanthus: 'Very hardy plants of the lily family that form big evergreen tufts of swordlike foliage and throw heads of either blue or white flowers in early summer. Useful for planting in dry awkward corners or in sandy country near the coast.'

Olive Mellor (1891–1978), wrote in *Complete Australian Gardener Illustrated* (c. 1951):

Agapanthus are invaluable for growing in large areas, particularly positions where it is difficult to get other plants to thrive. They do not seem to be fussy as to soil conditions, for they grow and bloom as well in a heavy, uncultivated clay as they do in a light sandy soil. For this reason they are largely used for colour effect in parks and along railway lines. They could be used most effectively in rocky outcrops, wherever there is enough soil to make a pocket for planting.

By the 1990s agapanthus had become 'almost too common to mention' according to Sarah Guest in *The Weekly Times Gardening Handbook* (1993).



Garden escape?

While agapanthus is now categorised as an environmental weed (*The CSIRO Handbook of Australian Weeds* (1997) and Kate Blood's *Environmental Weeds* (2001)), initially it took many years to naturalise in Victoria. It was not listed in James Willis' *A Handbook to Plants in Victoria* (1973) but is included in Volume 2 of Walsh and Entwisle's *Flora of Victoria* (1994), with the comment:

Widely grown as an ornamental, persisting in abandoned settlements and along some roadsides, apparently rarely reproducing by seed in Victoria, but established (perhaps as a result of dumping of garden refuse) in various localities (e.g. Warrichelsea area, Tallangatta, Sorrento).

Cultivated in New Zealand since at least the 1850s, agapanthus is now included in the *Consolidated list of environmental weeds in New Zealand* (2008), compiled by Clayson Howell and published by the Department of Conservation.

Repeated references to the spread of agapanthus by dumping garden refuse suggest that agapanthus is not invasive in itself but initially spreads due to the bad behaviour of humans. The plant can hardly be held responsible for that. Dumping tends to occur because clumps of agapanthus slowly increase in size and can become too big for their allotted space in a garden. When the clumps are divided to maintain



the garden design, the problem of disposing the surplus propagules arises. Breaking up the plant material requires care, as the sticky, poisonous sap released can cause skin irritation and even mouth ulceration. Careful composting would seem to be the solution and a small price to pay for the pleasure of the flowers. Instead of describing agapanthus as a 'garden escape', as in the entry in *Weeds of the South-East*, the more appropriate metaphor might be 'deportee'.

The case for agapanthus

Agapanthus is now recognised as a fire-retardant plant. A story on ABC Rural (9 September 2020) reported that when the Cudlee Creek bushfire tore through Angus Campbell's Adelaide Hills property *Jura* in 2019, agapanthus plants helped to stop the grassfire coming towards his house. He was so impressed that he planted 400 metres of them along the driveway to his house ahead of the next bushfire season. He said that the agapanthus were not the 'be all and end all' but were part of the mix along with watering and preparing the property. The Deep Green Permaculture website includes agapanthus in *Australian Native and Exotic Fire Resistant Trees and Plants for Fireproof Landscapes*.

Another supporter is Sarah Guest, who wrote enthusiastically in *Flowers from Old Adam's Garden* (1991):

Agapanthus, those noble plants that put out an annual welcome to summer holiday-makers on the Mornington Peninsula, are hard to ignore. Love them or loathe them – and most people fall neatly into one camp or the other – each year they raise their stately heads to smile at the sky and tell us that the time has come to enjoy ourselves.

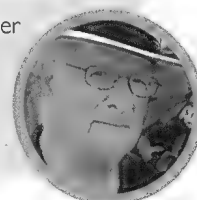
Referring to its status as a weed, she said:

I should like to put in a few words for the plant. Apart from the fact that our agapanthus are the envy of overseas visitors, they have become part of the summer scene...All emotional stuff but on the factual side they are a quick, reliable way of controlling erosion. A compromise is possible. I would like to suggest that gardeners remove the seed heads once flowering is finished...

I have much sympathy for this position and have enjoyed for more than 60 years the contribution agapanthus plants make to the landscape.

Agapanthus taking over an abandoned block, photo Francesca Beddie

Dr John Dwyer is a retired QC and a former chair of AGHS. His publications include his book *Weeds, plants and people* and many articles in *Australian Garden History* about weeds and landscape.



For the bookshelf

Mark Johnston, *The Tree Experts, A History of Professional Arboriculture in Britain*
Windgather Press, 2021

Covering over 2,000 years of Britain's garden history, Mark Johnston delves deeply into how the Romans first introduced the idea of amenity horticulture and then chronologically follows the

development of arboriculture through turbulent history spanning the Dark Ages to the modern era. While Johnston's focus is on historical sources, his writing holds a narrative quality as he follows the lives of the people who cared for these landscapes, drawing parallels between practices from the past that remain relevant in the present.

Johnston dedicates each chapter to a particular era, brought to life by the detailed descriptions of the people who shaped the fashion and style

of not only horticulture but most particularly, arboriculture, in each age. With each chapter, the timeline draws closer to the modern era and the breadth and depth of information grows. While primary sources are sparse through the Roman era and the Dark Ages, the Age of Enlightenment and the invention of the printing press offer rich fodder for Johnston's research. He pays close attention to gardening texts and guides written by arboriculture personalities of the time.

Pioneers in each era are introduced: the wealthy landowners who invested heavily in private gardens and forests thus ensuring the demand for professional tree workers; and entrepreneurs who ran nurseries, consulted and produced instructional manuscripts. Johnston emphasises that arboriculture is built on the shoulders of giants — each generation benefiting from the knowledge and practices of those before them, eventually leading to the present day, when students pursue university degrees in amenity arboriculture. Britain's accumulated knowledge depended too on the exchange of people and ideas from mainland Europe, which were constantly shaping methods, style and fashions. French influence was particularly notable, waxing and waning in popularity depending on the political and economic climate of the time.

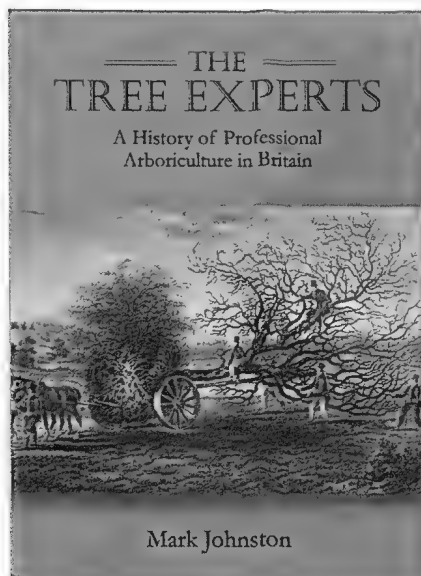


The reader learns that, regardless of the era, the arboriculture industry follows patterns. As economies rise and fall so too do the quality and style of gardens. When wealth was abundant there was expansion of large private estates; styles tended to be fussy and detailed.

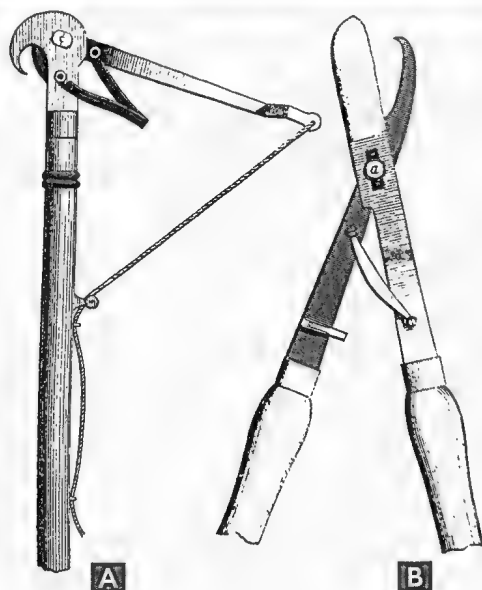
When less money was available, more relaxed, less demanding types of gardens appeared. Times of prolific advances in arboriculture mirrored stable and peaceful times in Britain from the time of the Caesars right up until the end of the Second World War in 1945. Although poor workmanship and untrustworthy contractors may seem like a modern concept, Johnston suggests this is a problem that has plagued the industry for centuries.

The topic of a tree's value is slowly teased out across several chapters leading up to the modern era. For millennia, trees had served two main purposes: fruiting trees produced food and forestry trees were nurtured for fuel and building material. The idea of a tree existing purely for beauty was the reserve of the wealthy, whose vast estates, gardens and forests were physical signs of their power and wealth. As Britain developed a new middle class off the back of the Industrial Revolution, and as more people were able to indulge in gardens for pleasure, the value of amenity trees grew. Towns and cities developed their own local governments, leading to the creation of public parks and streetscapes and a growing demand for specialists who had the expertise and skills to safely manage and maintain trees in public ownership.

One of the most fascinating sections of the book is the idea of transplanting large trees.



The illustration on the cover shows Sir Henry Steuart's transplanting machine in action in the 1820s moving a large tree in his landscape park at Allanton in Scotland. The tree was kept in the horizontal position during transport by 'balancemen' who sat on the trunk and among the branches.



Left Many elements of formal gardens in the late 17th and early 18th century required intensive pruning, such as these palisades at 'The Three Walks' at Chiswick House c. 1753, image courtesy Mark Johnston

Right Nineteenth-century tree-pruning equipment, image courtesy Mark Johnston.

A The French-invented averruncator;

B The British-invented long reach pruner in operation

Johnston draws on manuscripts each proclaiming their own methods and opinions on the how, when and even why a tree should be moved. The book has detailed contemporary illustrations of various contraptions and some impressive photos from the Victorian era. It seemed moving of a large full-grown tree could be quite the social event!

In each chapter the reader discovers the various 'industry standards' applying to arboriculture. Like in other parts of horticulture it is clear that old habits die hard. One idea that persisted well after proven scientifically false was that a tree would do better if it were pruned, fertilised, harvested or have any number of other treatments only when the moon was in a certain phase.

Johnston is not in unfamiliar territory writing about trees. He has two other books to his credit: *Trees in Towns and Cities: A History of British Urban Arboriculture* and *Street Trees in Britain: A History* but *The Tree Experts* is the first book to trace the history of the professional arborist from the Roman 'arborator' to the present-day chartered arboriculturist. These experts emerge as the heroes of Johnston's history, each having played their part in contributing to the knowledge we hold today. Writing a book as in-depth as this is a challenging and commendable task at the best of times but to do this with his own health deteriorating and the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic shows true determination and dedication to his chosen industry.

It is often easy to feel disconnected from what life in the past was like. Gardening is one very tangible way of experiencing how life was lived in the past, with the essential connection to nature echoing in contemporary practices.

We now have all the power of modern technology to assist with every decision made about a tree or group of trees. Through my own work in the horticulture industry I have been able to benefit from GPS satellite images and software that can plot tree locations and track changes over time. Radar and sonar equipment help to predict rot and decay; drones and remote cameras enable safe access high up in the canopy to fully assess a tree. Internet searches make it easy to find information about a tree or a landscape history as well as the modern laws, standards and practices designed to ensure work is carried out in a safe and consistent manner. Understanding as much as possible about a tree and its environmental, cultural and social value, helps to fully inform any decisions regarding a tree's ongoing and future care.

The image of a person digging a hole with a spade to plant a young sapling or expertly pruning a full-grown mature specimen is one that fits into any of the eras covered in this story. There may be differences in tools, techniques and reasons for planting over the ages but ultimately it is still the same thing: humans seeking to better their lives by the cultivation of beautiful living plants.

Stuart Macpherson is Head Gardener for Frensham Schools, looking after its three campuses, Frensham, Gib Gate and Sturt since 2016. He has worked in the horticulture industry for nearly 25 years working in both landscape construction and maintenance. More than nine of those years were spent working as a horticulturist for Sydney Living Museums (Historic Houses Trust of NSW). Macpherson received support from the Nina Crone Writing Fund.

Great Properties of Tasmania

<https://www.gardenhistorysociety.org.au/remarkable-gardens/>

https://www.mup.com.au/books/great-properties-of-tasmania-hardback?mc_cid=7e46d68719&mc_eid=ff88f4c76e

The AGHS maintains a register of remarkable gardens, notable for their heritage significance, their quality, intactness or 'integrity' (for example of an historic era or style). Two of those listed in Tasmania, *Brickendon* (1820s buildings; 1840s+ garden) and *Panshanger* (1830s+ farm estate garden, once extroverted, now introverted, around a fine Greek Revival house), also feature in a new publication by Richard Allen and Kimbal Baker, *Great Properties of Tasmania* (The Miegunyah Press, 2021, \$59.99) reviewed here by Prue Slatyer.

In Tasmania, writer Richard Allen and photographer Kimbal Baker found a variety of rural properties unlike anything they'd seen on the mainland. The climate, the landscapes and the sandstone Georgian houses are distinctively Tasmanian. As the state with the second oldest European settlement in Australia, Tasmania has a significant collection of colonial estates. This book, *Great Properties of Tasmania*, documents 18 of these private properties.

Tasmania's rich rural heritage is the result of an early period of spectacular growth, assisted by abundant convict labour and imperial government investment, followed by long bouts of economic depression. As Richard Archer of *Brickendon*, comments:

'There is so much interesting old stuff in Tasmania because of the lack of capital...The really grand homes have lots of authentic things and have not been modified too much.'

Most of the properties were established in the 1820s on land grants located on rivers such as the Macquarie, South Esk, Ouse and Derwent, ensuring continual water supply. The majority are in the Midlands, between Hobart and Launceston; others are in the Derwent Valley. The land had been fire-managed over millennia by its Aboriginal custodians, creating landscapes of open grassland with copses of trees, ideal for sheep, initially the primary source of revenue for colonial settlers. Breeding sheep for superfine wool has prevailed on many properties, with some consistently winning international awards for their wool.

For others, the wool crisis of the 1980s and 1990s, changes in the global economy and climate have resulted in diversification, with cropping becoming as important as sheep. Centre pivot irrigation and the ready source of water from rivers has enabled cultivation of poppies for pharmaceutical purposes, as well as grain and vegetables. One property, *Meadowbank*, is primarily devoted to wine grapes and the production of its award-winning wine, while *Lawrenny* grows barley for its whisky distillery, and *Mountford* is a serious producer of hydroponically grown berries.

Buildings on these properties are often almost 200 years old, constructed with convict labour. They include elegant houses as well as numerous outbuildings. Perhaps the most distinctive house in the book is *Panshanger*, described by former Prime Minister Paul Keating as one of his favourite buildings. A few have late 19th-century homesteads designed by prominent Hobart architect Henry Hunter, who also designed the Hobart Town Hall and the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery, among many other buildings.

As an island state, Tasmania's population is relatively stable and many of the properties in the book are owned, or worked on, by sixth or, in the case of *Brickendon* seventh, generations of the original settlers, a rarity in Australia.

It is inspiring to read of the sense of responsibility that many owners feel in being custodians of historic properties. Richard Archer of *Brickendon* thinks Tasmanian farmers are long sighted; they appreciate the structures and houses they own

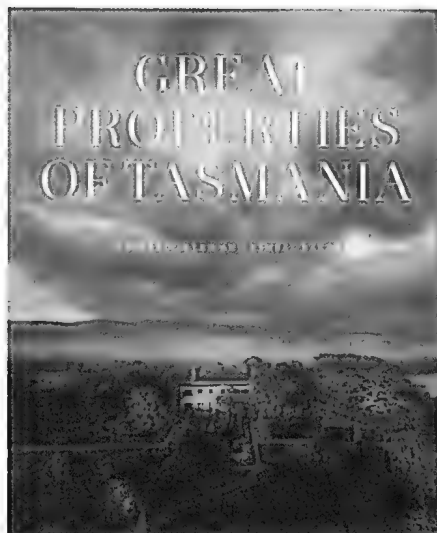


and make wonderful caretakers. For Roderic O'Connor of *Connorville* aiming to leave a long-term viable property means devoting a substantial area to native forest under a perpetual covenant and setting aside native forest for carbon sequestration. Hugh Mackinnon of *Mountford* sees himself and his family as custodians of the infrastructure and land; he is striving to leave it in better shape and more productive for future generations. Hugh has planted tens of thousands of trees with Landcare and Greening Australia. Nick Mills of *Panshanger* is focusing on regenerative agriculture, improving the soil health using natural fertilisers and weed control. Piers Dumaesq of *Mount Ireh* feels the future is in maintaining Tasmania's clean green image with world-class products.

Many of the properties have associations with interesting and well-known people. *Ashton's* Scott Ashton-Jones has a great-great-great grandfather who was a leader in the establishment of the township of Melbourne. Henry Reed, the original owner of *Wesley Dale*, also assisted in the settlement of Melbourne. One of his grandsons, Sir Hudson Fysh, was the founder of Qantas and another, John Reed, married Sunday Baillieu and lived at Heidelberg, at what is now the Heide Museum of Modern Art in Victoria. The Queen and Prince Philip stayed at *Connorville* in 1954, planting a golden elm alongside an oak grown from an acorn brought from Ireland by Roderic O'Connor in 1824.

Lochiel, photo Kimbal Baker, courtesy Melbourne University Press.

As well as being visually appealing, Baker's photographs are illuminating, especially for garden lovers. They show details of grand old trees, some 150 or 200 years old, and capture the splendour of the extensive gardens surrounding some of the houses, especially those of *Brickendon*, *Lawrenny*, *Lochiel*, *Panshanger* and *Trefusis*.



The book is the result of lengthy visits and discussions with the owners who openly and honestly share their family history, the chronicle of their properties and their vision for the future. As a result, it is as series of conversations about people relating to the land. This makes the book more engaging and appealing than a purely factual history. Allen does not attempt to draw conclusions or place the stories in the broader context of Tasmanian history. Following a foreword by Geoffrey Blainey, the book is structured as a collection of separate stories about each property, arranged alphabetically. An advantage of this structure is that it need not be read in any order but can be dipped into at random.

In keeping with the high quality of the Miegunyah imprint, this book's large format highlights Kimbal Baker's superb photographs. These show property owners and family members, often with their dogs, the day-to-day working life, the homesteads and their interiors, gardens, animals (lots of sheep) and rural landscapes, often under the dramatic skies so typical of Tasmania. As well as being visually appealing, the photographs are illuminating, especially for garden lovers. They show details of

grand old trees, some 150 or 200 years old, and capture the splendour of the extensive gardens surrounding some of the houses, especially those of *Brickendon*, *Lawrenny*, *Lochiel*, *Panshanger* and *Trefusis*.

Here is another successful collaboration between writer Richard Allen and photographer Kimbal Baker, which follows on from *Great Properties of Country Victoria*, *Australia's Remarkable Trees* and others. It is recommended as a beautiful and informative insight into the history of some of Tasmania's, and Australia's, earliest rural properties.

Prue Slatyer is an architect, landscape architect and historian living in Tasmania. Prue is vice chair of the AGHS Tasmanian branch and convenor of the 2022 AGHS national conference in Hobart.



AGHS 42nd Annual Conference, Hobart, Tasmania

LANDSCAPE ON THE EDGE:

Challenge and Opportunity

Australian Garden History Society Conference
Hobart 11th–13th November 2022



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2 MAY 2022



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- 15–18 November Post-conference tour to northern Tasmania led by Trisha Dixon

For all conference information, including booking details:

www.gardenhistorysociety.org.au/events-conference/2022-annual-national-conference/

Profile

STEPHEN HATHWAY, NMC member and national treasurer

Not long after I joined AGHS (Sydney branch) last year, having heard about the activities and cultural engagement of the Society, I offered some accounting suggestions. By the next AGM in November 2021, I found myself appointed your national Treasurer! I will come back to this after I tell you a bit more about myself: I am more than an accountant.

My hometown is Tamworth where before me three generations of the Hathway family held a few acres on the edge, as it was then, of the town. The family ran a chicken hatchery, supplying day-old chickens to local farmers and backyard owners. That industry changed dramatically in the 1970s and the family switched its focus to our grain farm near the Tamworth airport. The original house, built 100 years ago, is still in the family. In true Federation style the house has two cabbage palms (*Livistona australis*) and the remains of a privet hedge.

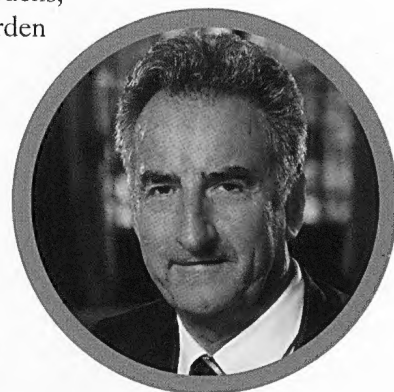
I started gardening with my grandmother, Ivy Hathway, and recall my grandfather's growing skills in our typical farm of fig trees, a few fruit trees, a grape vine and the veggie patch. Ivy was forever taking cuttings or exchanging plants at the local church fetes. She was engrossed in the Edwardian tradition of collecting. Her nursery had as many exotic plants able to survive the NSW western district's climate as she could find. Her most treasured plant was a white begonia.

For many years my gardening was restricted to moving pots around small balconies or in the back yards of inner-city terraces. This changed

five years ago when my partner and I bought a house in Leura. It is right next door to the National Trust house and gardens, *Everglades*. The bones of the garden were strong but it was really overgrown. It took me a while to work out which trees had to go to allow more sun to get through. I put in a fish pond, metres of gravel paths and a few benches to do what you should do from time to time while out in the garden: sit and appreciate the seasons. These you certainly get in Leura and I now have plants that did not grow well in Tamworth, if at all, like rhododendron and camellias. Leura hits it high in spring with all its bulbs but equally the number of deciduous trees turning in autumn make it special.

I run a small insolvency practice as a chartered accountant, and am presently on the board of the Royal Automobile Club of Australia. I also have the privilege of being the president of an association of insolvency practitioners (AIIP). I am hoping this professional experience will help grow the AGHS. My first project in this new role is to pursue the possibility of gaining charity and not-for-profit status for the Society. This would enable us to accept donations directly.

I look forward to meeting fellow members as we are finally able to get out on garden tours and engage in the conferences, which are such a proud tradition of the Society.



Inside view

What a thrill to see many enticing tours and events already scheduled in 2022.

If you haven't caught up, we recommend you visit the AGHS website, study the National E-News and branch newsletters, as online and face-to-face events are added weekly. You don't want to miss out!

The National Management Committee (NMC) has launched into 2022 with renewed vigour. As already acknowledged, COVID unexpectedly enabled us to become proficient in new technologies and expand the reach of our events. It also gave us an opportunity to analyse and reflect on how we operate to fulfil our mission, promote our presence and ensure our viability in the immediate future. These reflections and a survey of our members resulted in adopting the following four goals with practical strategies.

1	Raise awareness of the Society's work
2	Develop tools to assist us with advocacy
3	Find new funding opportunities to support our work in identifying, researching and recording significant gardens and cultural landscapes
4	Develop a Society response to climate change

This process has been thought provoking and we thank all those who took the time to contribute. Here is one suggestion that struck a chord with the NMC:

Rather than maintaining a purely reactionary stance to advocacy, develop a proactive approach as well... identification of significant gardens and landscapes is an important aspect of even being able to choose between these approaches ... advocacy for socially significant sites has risen markedly under the impact of the pandemic, not because the heritage industry has reacted to threats but because the broader community has been proactive in elevating it. AHGS could develop some new areas for advocacy, perhaps arising from the climate change work in goal 4.



The NMC is now working towards these goals. With representatives from all nine branches throughout Australia, it has been exciting to learn about each other's practical strategies and to adopt these as we collectively work towards achieving our mission. In relation to goal four, the newly formed Climate Change Advisory Working Group, chaired by our Patron Tim Entwisle, has already begun meeting and we look forward to hearing their recommendations.

Finally, as we reel from another series of daunting climatic events, we acknowledge the heartbreak and tremendous energy it takes to rejuvenate damaged gardens and landscapes and thank you for your passion and commitment to them and their communities. As well as focussing on those places we already know and love, we encourage you to listen out and report stories about other significant gardens and landscapes that deserve acknowledgement, support or advocacy. They may be a modern private garden, a public park or landscape that assumes greater social significance for communities as they come together to help and heal. Let's hear about them.

Thank you to our editor, Francesca Beddie, for another thought-provoking issue, to all the authors who have contributed, to the Editorial Advisory Committee and to Mariana Rollgejser, who makes it shine.

Stuart Read and Bronwyn Blake, Co-Chairs

<https://www.gardenhistorysociety.org.au/events-conferences/>

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Editor

Francesca Beddie
editor@gardenhistorysociety.org.au
0418 645 181

Designer

Mariana Rollgeiser

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BRANCH CONTACTS

ACT/Monaro/Riverina

Marg Bourke
marg@mebourke.com

Northern NSW

Helen Oates
helen_oates10@hotmail.com

Queensland

Ann Wegener
annwegener@me.com

South Australia

Dr Patricia Michell
pamichell@gmail.com

Southern Highlands

Ruth Bailey
ruthbailey1428@gmail.com

Sydney

Christine Hay
christinehay@circlesquare.com.au

Tasmania

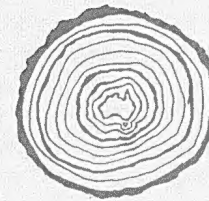
Jean Elder and Rosie Mackinnon (Co-Chairs)
jeanldr@gmail.com AND armackin@intas.net.au

Victoria

Wendy Dwyer
wamdwyer@gmail.com

Western Australia

John Viska
johnviska@gmail.com



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AGHS enquiries

phone 0419 977 703

email info@gardenhistorysociety.org.au

website www.gardenhistorysociety.org.au

Gate Lodge 100 Birdwood Ave
Melbourne VIC 3004

Postal address

PO Box 479

Somers Vic. 3927

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The views expressed in this journal are those of the contributors and are not necessarily shared by the Australian Garden History Society.

Panshanger, Tasmania, photo Thomas Mills

Getting to know them

stories from the AGHS national oral history collection

Richard Aitken, appointed an honorary life member of the Australian Garden History Society in 2015, spoke at length to Roslyn Burge in 2010 about his involvement, from its inception, in the Society. In this extract he talks about *The Oxford Companion to Australian Gardens*, published 20 years ago in 2002. This was the first reference book to cover the history of gardening and garden design in Australia.

The Society was extraordinarily generous in supporting that project. I was initially approached in 1993 by Oxford University Press to do a Companion, very much in the model of the [UK] Oxford Companion to Gardens. That's a very jealously guarded phrase – *The Oxford Companion*.

...I had to devise some funding model for getting the research done, and so I approached the Australian Heritage Commission through their National Estate Grants Program and it was kind of agreed that if we had a consistent brief, that they would try and get their various state committees to fund a uniform set of consultancy studies throughout Australia...

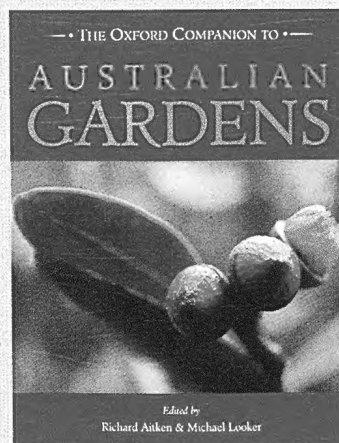
Margaret Darling [Chair of AGHS's National Management Committee from 1990 to 1999 and Patron from 1999 to 2006] gave \$25,000 to the Garden History Society on the understanding that the Society's National Committee would match that with \$25,000. And so armed with the nucleus of \$50,000, which was a very considerable amount, ...I was able...to go to the publishers and say, 'Well, look, this is funding that will get this project over the line. I believe it would be appropriate that the book have joint imprint with the Garden History Society.' And so that was the case.

...it was always a proud moment for me that the Society was involved to that extent, because we had 220 individual contributors of which a very large majority were Garden History Society members.

I'd certainly say that 2002 and the publication of that Oxford Companion was a peak moment for the Society, but I think also for the discipline as a whole. I like to hope that it's advanced the cause of scholarship in garden history in Australia.

When you began the project, did you think it would last as long as it took?

No, no. I wouldn't probably have dreamed of taking it on. It was very much a part-time affair in the early years but, ... to the detriment my own architectural practice, I probably



It is the most pedestrian dust wrapper. I remember Peter Watts helping me to contact the publisher saying, 'Couldn't we have something a bit more zingy?', but Oxford are quite conservative publishers and they wanted something that looked like the parent, the British Companion.

devoted two or three years at the end almost full time to the project...I wouldn't go to bed until I'd edited 10 entries for the day. That was if you could get entries out of people.

Was that difficult?

Oh, with some it was. This probably will be no secret that it was difficult getting an entry out of James Broadbent and yet he contributed a marvellously witty entry on tyre swans, which is now the most quoted entry in the entire book. It was a daunting task. It happened at the right stage in my career. I don't think you could think of starting something like that in your 50s or 60s. I think you really needed to be in your 30s or 40s.

...It was, at one stage, all in my head and I could tell you anything that was in it, but, of course, now with the passage of time...I now proudly use it as a reference text. It really fostered a great spirit of cooperation and goodwill, especially amongst members of the Garden History Society, in a way that perhaps hasn't been replicated since that period, and it would, I think, be wonderful to have some unifying force within the Society that not only brought members together but did it with scholarship at its core, because that, was a very embodiment of everything that the Society stood for.



The Australian Garden History Society promotes awareness and conservation of significant gardens and cultural landscapes through engagement, research, advocacy and activities.